

BLYTHBURGH

FOCUS

SERVING BLYTHBURGH,
BULCAMP AND HINTON



Issue No.30

<http://blythburgh.onesuffolk.net>

November/ December 2016

First success in campaign to save chapel

Suffolk Coastal District Council has issued a directive blocking the demolition of the Primitive Methodist Chapel in Dunwich Road and the building of two semi-detached houses on the site. Announcing the decision, the council said it considers demolition of the chapel would be prejudicial to the proper planning of the area and would constitute a threat to the amenities.

The ban, imposed towards the end of September, will last for six months. The council will have to confirm or withdraw the decision within that period. The Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs may also modify or cancel the order, which can also be appealed against by the owner of the chapel.

Blythburgh Parish Council, which had objected to the demolition proposals, welcomed the

decision at its meeting on November 15. The council was delighted that Suffolk Coastal had identified the building as a non-designated heritage asset as it had proposed. The demolition proposal had also been opposed by the Suffolk Preservation Association. In a letter to Suffolk Coastal, the society said “the total loss of the Old Chapel should be resisted due to its importance to the local area both architecturally and historically”.

In an email to Alan Mackley, chair of the council’s planning advisory group, Iain Robertson, Area Planning and Enforcement Officer email: iain.robertson@eastssuffolk.gov.uk or 01502 523067 asked to be contacted by villagers if they became aware of activity at the site that may appear harmful to the building.

Digging for history – in your garden!

Next April a group of pupils from local state secondary schools, supervised by archaeologists from Cambridge University, will come to Blythburgh for a two-day archaeological project. The plan is to dig up to 12 one-metre square pits (within walking distance of the base at the church) and produce a professional report on what is found.

The scheme, called Access Cambridge Archaeology, has been running since 2005 and has already involved Reydon, Southwold and Walberswick. Young people get a chance to be involved in new, fun and challenging activities. There is no shortage of archaeology in Blythburgh, in addition to the obvious priory site dug by Time Team. Most recently the Amberley Close development turned up Anglo-Saxon settlement and metal spear-heads.

This is a chance for villagers to get to know more about their own patch, to add to understanding of how Blythburgh developed, and contribute to historical and archaeological knowledge more generally. Having experts look at the fragments of tile, pottery and metal that turn up all over the village will be a great opportunity. The pits are back-filled and left tidy, and quickly become invisible. The disruption, say the organisers, is absolutely minimal. Before April someone will come from Cambridge to select sites from a candidate list. You can dig your own pits as well while the experts are here. If you would like to volunteer a spot in your garden or open space contact Sonia Boggis 478687 or Alan Mackley, 478438.

NEAL'S PRIVATE HIRE

Airports. Local & Long Distance
Friendly Reliable Service



4 -8 Seaters
Available

01502 575 888
Mob: 07899 011383

Paul Cook

Gardening Services

Fully Insured



Gardening * Grass Cutting
Strimming* Hedge Cutting
Fencing repaired or replaced

Free Quotations on Request

Mobile: 07879 285971

Home thoughts from a broad...



TRAFFIC WATCH

A12 Southbound: September 10 to October 7. Of the total 169,706 vehicles, 55,505 were travelling between 25 and 30mph and a further 53,350 between 30 and 35mph. Including the 14,320 vehicles travelling at less than 25mph then 123,175 were at or slightly above the legal speed. This represents 73% of the total which is very slightly better than the 72% last time the A12 Southbound was monitored.

Of the remaining 46,531 vehicles (27%) 27,632 vehicles (16%) were travelling between 35 to 40 mph; 11,642 (7%) 40 to 45mph; 4,300 (2.5%) 45 to 50mph; 1818 (1%) 50 to 55mph; 720 (1%) 55 to 60mph; and 282 at 60 to 65. There was a small handful at higher speeds including nine between 75 and 80 and one in excess of 80. These figures are broadly similar to previous monitoring periods on the A12 southbound but do show a very slight improvement in observing the speed limit.

A12 Northbound: October 9 to November 5. Of the total 123,488 vehicles, 59,251 were travelling between 25 and 30mph with a further 29,232 between 30 and 35mph. Including the 20,373 vehicles travelling at less than 25mph then 108,856 were at or only slightly above the legal speed.

This represents 88% of the total which is about average for this location. Of the remaining 14,632 vehicles (12%) 8,842 (7%) were travelling between 35 to 40 mph; 3,491 (3%) 40 to 45mph; 1,318 (1%) 45 to 50mph; 643 (less than 1%) 50 to 55mph; 35 cars at 55 to 60mph; 75 at 60 to 65mph. A few vehicles travelled at higher speeds; including two at 75 to 80 mph. These figures are broadly similar to previous monitoring periods on the A12 Northbound.

Roderick Orr-Ewing



Christmas/ New Year

Christmas Day

Open 11.30 to 4pm All welcome for drinks. Bookings for food with a pre-order one week ahead with non-refundable deposit of £10 for adults, children £5. Four courses: £67.50; £32.50 for children 5 to 12. Under 5, free.

Christmas Party

December 1 to December 22. Pre-order one week ahead with non-refundable deposit of for £10 adults. Two courses, £19.95, three, £24.95.

New Year's Eve

Open 11am till late. Food, 12 to 12.30pm; 5 to 7.30pm. Booking essential. Music from *Handle with Care* 9.30pm to 12.30am. Fireworks after Big Ben, weather permitting.

Christmas Quiz and Draw.

7.30pm December 20. £3.00 a head for teams of four. Christmas Draw to follow quiz. Tickets available now from the bar or shop.

01502 478521

Village Store

Coming soon Christmas hampers and pre-order list for Christmas goods.

Together with all essential items, the shop also offers deli goods, fresh coffee and snacks and home-smoked produce.

Delivery is now available on Mondays and Thursday, free within a five-mile radius, 50p a mile thereafter.

Opening hours

Weekdays, 10.00am to 4pm

Saturday, 10am to 5.30pm

Sunday, 12 to 4.00pm

The shop will be shut on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

**Stuck for a
Christmas gift? Why
not give a bar or
shop voucher?**

BLYTHBURGH REFLECTIONS

Shots, shots and more shots...

The winning shot was played at 5pm after a thrilling 14-12, 11-9 victory. It was 1970 and Margaret Court had beaten Billy Jean King to win the third leg of her Grand Slam attempt.

Lawn Tennis magazine, printed at Lowlands, Wenaston contained extensive coverage of the full Wimbledon fortnight. Search the credits and the name Basil Lowe appears a number of times: Roger Taylor, Karen Krantzcke and an action shot of John Newcombe among the best. Basil, current leader of Blythburgh Bowls Club, was despatched, photographer's pass in hand, to cover the 1970 Wimbledon Championships. More recently, Harry Waller and Basil's son have enjoyed a fruitful tennis partnership.

Also in 1970, Halesworth Press printed the Ipswich Town FC match programmes: Bobby

Robson was manager and the big discussion point was "Are you paying enough for your football?" The minimum ticket price, laid down by the league, was six shillings (30p) the price of a packet of cigarettes. Some clubs felt this was not enough to provide a sound financial base so charged a bit more. The debate was fierce and the comparators banded about how to gauge value for money related to prices 10 and 20 years earlier: 1950/51 you could watch Stanley Matthews for one shilling and three pennies (6p) and in the 1960/61 season it was two shillings (10p) to watch John Charles.

1970 was the year Mexico hosted the Football World Cup, won by Brazil for the third time. The Brazilian team, captained by Carlos Alberto and including Pele and Rivelino, is still cited as

the greatest ever world cup team. £25 for a ticket was a lot of money but how do you put a price on memories?

Focus illustrator, Spike Gerrell, has made his living drawing pictures but at heart he is still a central midfielder and harbours the dream of playing football for England. Sadly, this is very unlikely now but Spike uses his extensive knowledge of "the beautiful game" to illustrate the recently published *Football School: Where Football Explains the World*. The book, the first in a new series, aims to teach youngsters about the world through the prism of football and follows the timetable of lessons at a football-

obsessed school. It's no surprise that Brazil is a Top Footballing Nation and the illustration is from the Geography class highlighting that Brazilian footballers



who grow up playing "futsal" becoming skilful, fast and confident on the ball. More surprising is the psychology class which explains how to take the perfect penalty. *Note to self – is this the perfect Christmas present for the England team?*

Blythburgh has its fair share of sportsmen and women all of whom are very good shots: John Bidwell (FITASC Sporting World Champion, European Champion and English Open Clay Pigeon Shooting Champion), David Etheridge (football for Millwall reserves and Lowestoft Town), Harry Waller (County table tennis and tennis) plus all the Blythburgh archers, bowlers, cricketers and golfers.

Last but not least, probably the best shot in the village, is Colin Huggins. Colin is working on the Blythburgh Year in Photographs.

Words: Sonia Boggis
Illustration: Spike Gerrell

Malcolm Doney report from the Palestinian West Bank

Seriously food for thought...

In October Meryl and I went to Israel and Palestine. Despite my church connections this wasn't a pilgrimage in the usual sense of the word – I'm slightly allergic to holy sites – but the idea was to see Palestine and Palestinians through the prism of food.

We went on a trip organised by the Amos Trust, a small human rights organisation, which has a particular concern for the plight of the Palestinian people. The trip was a feast, in every sense of the word. We spent most of our time in the West Bank, cooking, eating with, and talking to local people in their homes, in refugee camps, on farms and in the markets.

Palestinians are rightly proud of their food: aromatic rice and lentil dishes; delicious salads, alive with lemon and mint; melt-in-your-mouth chicken and lamb, marinated in oil and herbs.



Then, of course, there's falafel, labneh, a cheese made of yoghurt, and flat bread warm from the stove.

Food is bound up with identity. In Bethlehem, with a couple of our party, I worked alongside Takred, a woman in her early 50s, to cook makloubeh, a traditional Palestinian dish, for her extended family, including mother, uncle, sister, children and grandchildren. It was a recipe handed down from her grandmother who had brought it to Bethlehem when she and her

family were evicted from their rural village by Israeli forces in 1948.

We were in the Aida refugee camp. The term refugee camp conjures up rows of tents, or at best, a shanty town. This is not the case in Palestine. Aida, for example, did start off like this – it was established as a temporary settlement



in 1950 when residents were told that they would be there for a matter of weeks or months. Sixty-six years later, it's a small town – a kind of slum – which houses 4,700 people in concrete houses. Aida lies in the threatening shadow of the 26-foot high Israeli separation wall.

Makloubeh is a celebration dish – the word means upside-down. It's prepared and cooked in layers of rice, onion, garlic, potatoes, aubergine and chicken in a saucepan and then, as it is about to be served, flipped over dramatically on to a plate to rapturous applause. For these Palestinians, it was also a reminder that their home has been stolen – that their roots have been severed, and their land occupied.

Near Jericho, we met farmers who were refused permission to dig wells, to construct even a shelter for their animals. We met Daoud (David), a Palestinian Christian farmer, who's had his apricot trees destroyed by Israeli soldiers just before harvest, and who lives under the constant threat of demolition orders on a property where his family has lived for more than 100

years. Mahrai hasn't seen his sister for 25 years – even though she lives just 60 kilometres away in Gaza – his political activism in the past makes him a marked man.

Palestinians working in their fields look to the surrounding hills, where they are overlooked by encroaching Israeli settlements – not just the odd development, but often entire towns, with property available at bargain prices, boasting mains water, lawns, swimming pools, a consistent



energy supply, refuse collections, and good roads into the cities that only Israelis can use. Palestinians pay the same rates, the same taxes as the settlers, but with a fraction of the benefits.

The catch-all reason for the Israeli occupation is “security”. The Palestinians are widely seen as dangerous terrorists who must be kept at arm's length, harried, disrupted, so they cannot organise and attack Israel.

Eighteen per cent of the West Bank is under complete Palestinian control, though even here Israeli forces can enter at will. These zones, known under the Oslo Peace Accord as Area A, are bordered by huge red warning signs. They look like the kind of signs you'd see when entering a safari park. They say: “This road leads to a Palestinian village. The entrance for Israeli citizens is dangerous.” These people are like wild animals, is the subtext.

Yes, I understand that there's also an Israeli narrative, but this already receives a great deal of air time. The purpose of me telling you of our experiences, is because, time and again, normal Palestinians – who were trying to make a living, bring up their children, provide a future for their communities – told us that they felt imprisoned, threatened, oppressed, and thwarted at every turn.

They are at their lowest ebb. The deck seems stacked against them. Their history is forgotten, their identity under threat. Their leaders are fighting among themselves. There is no Nelson Mandela, no Martin Luther King, no Gandhi, on the horizon.

Meryl and I believe the voice of the Palestinian people needs to be heard, and we promised our new friends that we would tell their stories. I hope someone's listening. Food for thought.

NEWS IN BRIEF

EDF Energy is holding a public exhibition in Blythburgh Village Hall on Wednesday 7 December 2016 from 11am to 3pm on the proposals for a new nuclear power station at Sizewell. The Phase 2 Consultation will begin on 23 November 2016. Go to www.sizewellc.co.uk/ to see the full exhibition schedule.

A few tickets to see *Jack and the Beanstalk* at the Theatre Royal, Norwich, on Saturday January 7 are still available. Please apply to Jenny Allen by e-mail jennyanddick@aol.com or in writing to Wolsey House, Chapel Road, with your name and address, the number of places requested, and a contact telephone number. Please also state if any children under three would share a seat with an adult. Assume that you have got places if Jenny does not contact you. The coach will leave the bus stop on the northbound A12 at 11.30am returning to Blythburgh around 6.30pm

The Parish Council is seeking someone to clean the bus shelters weekly. Do you have an hour a week to spare? Do you care about the village? If so then here is your opportunity to earn £10 per week and improve the look of the village. Please contact Jim Boggis, parish clerk, on 01502 478687

Meet the Blythburgh beauties

Because most moths fly after dark they miss the attention lavished on butterflies. Studying moths is one of those minority interests pursued by naturalists who don't mind being bitten by squadrons of mosquitos, challenged by police officers, and generally misunderstood by the rural community at large.

As the sun sets over the reed beds on the banks of the River Blyth, the last bird watchers head for home or the pub, so the moth lights begin to glow.

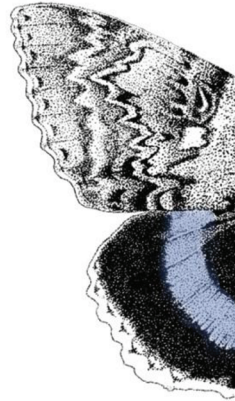
Moth traps, bin shaped containers rather like a terrestrial lobster pot with a lamp on top attract the normally unseen moths from the surrounding countryside.

Part of the fun and fascination is never knowing which moths will appear. From tiny moths such as the Diamond-back Moth that arrive, sometimes in their dozens of thousands from north Africa, to the sparrow sized Hawk-moths that may also have flown from central and southern Europe.

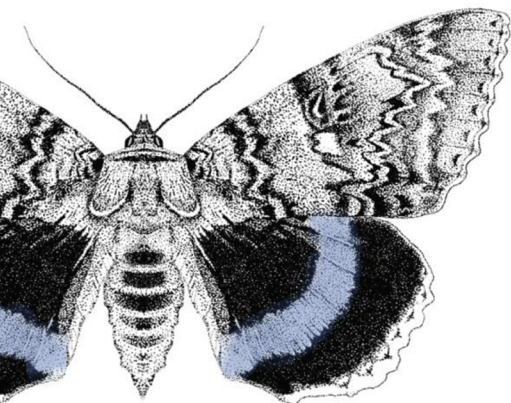
I have been out too many times to recall, when hardly any moths have

appeared at the lamps despite having driven a couple of hundred miles to an interesting spot. The northerly tip of the National Nature Reserve comes up almost as far as The White Hart and has long been famed for such interesting and local moths as the White Mantled Wainscot: a drab little brown moth only known in Britain from our coastal reed-beds.

When I was about five or six, my father, interested since his schooldays in butterflies and moths, began introducing me to natural history. I was taken out into the countryside both to enjoy and also to learn about the natural world. I recall my father always looking out for one particular spectacular moth, the magnificent Clifden Nonpareil (also known as the Blue Underwing). It is one of a group of moths know as "the underwings"



Who come out after dark



The Clifden Nonpareil

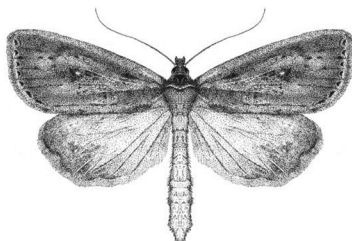
the most commonly encountered being the Red Underwing, often sitting on house walls, their big dusky grey forewings covering brilliantly red striped hind wings.

When disturbed they fly off very rapidly and you get the chance to see whether there was the red flash of hind wings of the common Red Underwing rather than the blue flash of the rare Clifden Nonpareil.

My father never saw one but I followed his quest. One morning in September 2006 I looked into one of my moth traps, I had a great surprise! So should you be walking after dark and you happen to see a

blueish light glowing in the undergrowth, it may well be a moth-er studying the local moths. When I started going out with lamps and traps nearly 50 years ago, there were probably only about 150 similar minded enthusiasts. Now there are thousands.

The records gathered by an army of moth recorders are helping to show the health of an important factor in our nation's wildlife.



The White Mantled Wainscot

Moths form a vital part of the diet of many birds and are vital in maintaining the balance of fauna and flora. Like much of our wildlife they are under enormous threat from habitat destruction, sprays, changes of land use and climate change.. There is more to moths than a few holes in your woollens!

David Wilson

NEWS FROM HOLY TRINITY

We will remember them...

On Remembrance Sunday, 13 Nov, besides remembering the fallen from the parishes of Blythburgh and Walberswick, the service focused on the death of Joe Kennedy and Bud Willy. Holy Trinity has commissioned a memorial panel to commemorate the death of these two brave American fliers whose plane exploded in the sky above New Delight Covert, Blythburgh Fen on 12 August 1944.

Joseph Kennedy Jr was the eldest son of Joseph Kennedy Sr (then US Ambassador to Britain), and brother of future US President John F Kennedy. He and his co-pilot Wilford Willy took off from an airfield near Diss to destroy the German V3 'super gun' site near Calais, whose shells were to be aimed at London.

Their Liberator aircraft was essentially a flying bomb, loaded with over 20,000lbs of Torpex. It had been adapted to be controlled remotely by an aircraft flying behind, once the crew had bailed out over Kent. Joe Kennedy had completed 25 combat missions and was eligible to return home, but instead volunteered for Operation Anvil. Bud Willy, an expert on radio control systems, pulled rank on Kennedy's regular co-pilot in order to take part.

Tragically, due to an electrical fault, the aircraft exploded in mid-air over Blythburgh, the largest explosion ever recorded over Britain. The damage on the ground was widespread – 147 houses were affected – but nobody was hurt. Current Blythburgh resident Mick Muttitt, at

nine years old, looked up to see the planes as they flew overhead. "I watched in horror as the lead aircraft exploded in a huge fireball. I vividly remember seeing burning wreckage falling earthwards, while engines with propellers still turning – and leaving comet-like trails of smoke – continued along the direction of flight before plummeting down."

Holy Trinity thanks go to John and Roselyn Crane for organising the memorial project, to Mick Muttitt for his eyewitness account, to John Constable Reeve for the painting of the Liberator aircraft, and to John Tym for the design of the memorial panel. A wreath was laid at the foot of the panel by Captain Daniel Cahoon, a pilot in the USAF, stationed at Lakenheath.

Christmas and New Year

Christmas celebrations start with a candle-lit festival of carols with the Blythburgh Singers on Saturday 17 December at 5.30pm. The church takes to the streets for carol singing on Wednesday 21 December, meeting at 5.45pm at Wolsey House, Chapel Road, and ending up at The Priory, Priory Road, when the last carols will be sung in the ruins of the 12th century priory. The popular family crib service takes place on Christmas Eve at 5.00pm. Midnight Mass starts at 11.30pm with an informal service on Christmas Day at 10.00am. The Blythburgh Singers will welcome in the New Year on Sunday 1 January at 6.00pm

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

Chair: David Tytler

01502 478521

Planning advisory group: Alan Mackley

Cliff Waller and Sonia Boggis

Finance advisory group

Roderick Orr-Ewing

Jeff Sutton and Jim Boggis

Councillor

Jo Waller

Clerk: Jim Boggis 01502 478687

BLYTHBURGH ASSOCIATIONS

Blythburgh Latitude Trust

Jim Boggis 01502 478687

Village Hall and Film Club

Olive Forsythe 01502 478521

Horticultural Society

Jenny Allen 01502 478314

Blythburgh Matters

Ro Williams 01502 478484

Blyth Belles

Sarah Wickham 070810632987

YOUR LOCAL LEGAL EXPERTS

Offering a full range of legal services.

For you

- Buying and selling your home
- Re-mortgages and transfers of equity
- Wills and powers of attorney
- Court of Protection
- Family and children matters
- Criminal matter
- Civil and personal injury claims
- Trusts and deceased estates
- Notarial services
- Care home fees
- Equity releases and lifetime mortgages
- NHS continuing healthcare

For your business

- Commercial property
- Employment matters
- Licensing
- Company formations
- Planning and regulatory



**Quality Solicitors
Norton Peskett**

- Direct lawyer contact Same-day response Clear Price Guarantee Free First Advice Saturday openings

Changing the way you see lawyers.

01502 533019
Lowestoft
01502 533 000

enquire@nortonpeskett.co.uk
Beccles
01502 718 700

Gorleston
01493 652 204

www.qualitysolicitors.com/nortonpeskett
Great Yarmouth
01493 849 200

Halesworth
01986 872 513

MRWCF Electrical

****Domestic and commercial***

****Rewires *Extra sockets/lights***

**** P.A.T. Testing***

****Inspection and testing***

CALL FOR FREE ESTIMATE

24 HOUR CALL OUT

TEL/FAX: 01502 478473 MOBILE: 07884 477110 / 07717 176655

Email: MRWCFElectrical@hotmail.co.uk



**NAPIT National Association of
Professional Inspectors and Testers
*CITY AND GUILDS QUALIFIED**



THE STAR INN



Set in the beautiful rolling Suffolk countryside, The Star has open fires in the winter and a good selection of traditional bar games, the large garden has a boules pitch to enjoy in the summer.

The range of real ales and home cooking using local ingredients make The Star a popular choice with locals and visitors alike.

Come and visit us and see the doom at St. Peter's church or take a walk on one of the five commons of Wenhaston.

For those wishing to stay in the area, camping at The Star is available by prior arrangement.

We are open every day from 12 noon-3pm & 6-11pm
Open all day on Sunday from noon – 11pm.

Food is served daily from 12.30-2.30 & 6.30-9.00pm

**The Star Inn
Wenhaston
Halesworth
Suffolk
IP19 9HF**

01502 478240

www.WENHASTONSTAR.CO.UK



**CHRISTMAS
MARKET**

SATURDAY

26 NOVEMBER

12 MIDDAY - 4 PM

**HOLY TRINITY
CHURCH**

BLYTHBURGH

MANTINS
SOLICITORS & NOTARIES

Providing you with the very highest quality client care and legal advice in the following areas:

**Residential and Commercial Conveyancing
General Property Matters
Wills
Probate
Notarial Services**

**82 High Street, Southwold, Suffolk IP18 6DP
Tel: 01502 724750 Fax: 01502 797930
enquiries@mantins.com
www.mantins.co.uk**



The homecare service where peace of mind comes as standard.

Due to continuous success of Prestige Nursing + Care Norwich, we now have a branch in Halesworth, Thoroughfare. Please call in to meet our friendly branch team who would be happy to discuss a package tailored to your needs.

We offer a wide range of services to help support your care needs:

- Personal Care
- Nursing Care
- Home from Hospital
- Palliative Care
- Respite Care
- Specialist Care
- Support with daily living
- Companionship

For more information on any of our services please contact:

01986 899075

email.halesworth@prestige-nursing.co.uk

Prestige
Nursing+Care

www.prestige-nursing.co.uk

DKC PLUMBING SERVICES

Comprehensive 24/7 service supplied for

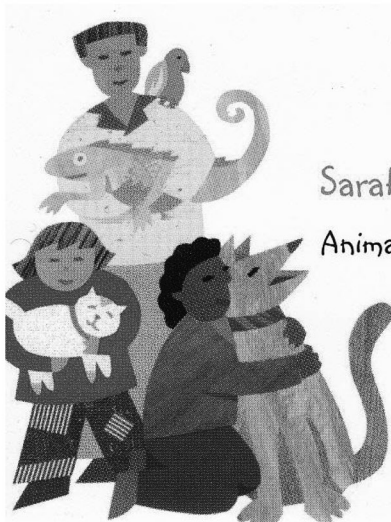
OIL BOILERS

PLUMBING

TILING

Telephone David on 07740272791

Email. DKCplumbingservices@gmail.com



A PET'S BEST FRIEND

Sarah Grimwood

Animal sitting & dog walking

9 Bigod Close

Halesworth

IP198SR

01986873592

frary8sr@btinternet.com

Notes from Daisy Bank LXXVI

The following is hardly 'news from Daisy Bank' and could be construed as just plain showing off and I would hate that. Please accept it as just memories associated with a certain type of alcoholic drink...

I am sitting in the garden with B and my oldest friend Jim who lives in Bristol and we are drinking Captain Morgan rum with ice, coke and Rose's Lime Juice. The sun is full and the sky is very, very blue and I am very, very happy. As soon as I open a new bottle the aroma of molasses and that heavenly smell of the Caribbean is both wonderful but also nostalgic.

I am 19 and sitting with a taxi driver outside a bar next to the harbour in Kingston Jamaica. I have never had rum before and of course never that combination. It is late afternoon and the sun is a startling red on the horizon and the air is full of warmth and tropical fragrance. The only difference between that drink and the one in Blythburgh is that it has fresh sliced limes which again were completely new to me.

Two portraits of heaven both to be treasured and remembered.

Now I am drinking gin and tonic talking about the latest edition of the *New Statesman* again with Jim. We are on an oil tanker in the Persian Gulf making our way home to *Blighty* with a nearly full cargo of oil. We loaded in Bandur Mashur in Iran and will top off at Baniyas in Syria once we have negotiated the Suez Canal. This will be our first election as voters and we intend to get Labour back in after *Thirteen Years of Tory Rule*. Years later Ray St Clair Brown and I will 'indulge' in the same way and have more or less the same sort of conversation. Dear Ray, I do miss him.

Now I am in DeBretts, a pub in Auckland and the room is crowded with men in circled groups drinking and laughing. In the centre of each group there are many large jugs of beer. Everybody knows that the pub will close at six pm and therefore there is an imperative to drink

as much as possible in a very short time. In New Zealand at that time with all that Presbyterian angst, women were banned from pubs so young men, as we were then, felt no pressure and could concentrate on men talk and men laughter. It was the same in my early rugby days when females were ejected, in the nicest possible way, after the party got going at whatever club we were at. God knows what Germaine would have to say about all that.

It's Townsville in Queensland. It's hot as hell and we have just gone into a bar where cowboy-like, the drovers have hitched their horses on rails outside on the dusty street. Slouch hats and shorts are everywhere and again it is a male only environment. The ice cold beer is dispensed using small petrol like pumps and is the perfect antidote to the inferno outside.

I am drinking a *Mai Tai* which I am told is some kind of cocktail. We are sitting at tables on Waikiki beach in front of a ritzy hotel in Honolulu. On the stage singing with a big band is Al Martino, later famous for his cameo role in *The Godfather*.

New York, surely the most exiting City in the world and I am drinking a glass of *Budweiser* – *the beer that made Milwaukee famous* – and on the back of the bar is George Shearing playing the piano as only he could.

It's Singapore Slings in the Raffles Hotel and I am pretending to be Graham Greene or is it Somerset Maugham. More likely just a run of the mill *pukka sahib* in those sad and sometimes negative days of the Raj.

I am pretending to enjoy a glass of *Grappa* in Cortona in glorious Tuscany. It's vile but it makes me feel like an Italian. On reflection maybe they hate it as well, which puts me in a somewhat awkward position.

I am in the *White Hart* with B drinking my very favourite drink, a pint of Adnams ordinary out of a mug and I'm - '*back in the room*'.

A date for your diary: The next meeting of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton Parish Council will be in the village hall on Tuesday January 24 at 7.30pm with the public forum at 7.15. Everybody is welcome to have their say.